disciplinary cases have come to, the know ledge of Reserve Bank of India and Government ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASEKHAR MURTHY) : Information called for in reply to Unstarred Question No. 912 for 3rd August, 1993 has since been furnished to the Department of Parliamentary Affairs on 2nd March, 1994 for being laid on the Table of the House. A copy of the same is given as Annexure. *[See* Appendix 170, Annexure No. 73]. As regards information subsequent to 31-3-1993, the same is not readily available. It is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Import of Consumer Goods

*335. SHRI GAYA SINGH:

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Govern ment are considering a proposal to allow import of consumer goods like TVs, VCRs. VCPs, Washing Machines, etc. against special import licences;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Consumer Electronics and Television Manufacturer's Association (CETMA) has submitted a note to the Ministry pointing out the drawbacks of the proposal; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Commerce has considered various proposals for allowing import of select items against Special Import Licences. In an, 67 items have been indicated in the Shopping List in Appendix XXXV of the Hand Book of Procedure*, Vol. I, 1992—97 (Revised Edition March 1994).

(c) and (d) M/s. CETMA had submitted a note to the Ministry of Commerce on the Special Import Licence Scheme stating that free import of consumer electronics items would adversely affect the domestic industry, and in particular, joint venture investment and employment. Special emphasis has been placed on safeguarding the domestic TV Industry against foreign competition. M/s. CETMA had proposed that a period of minimum 3-5 years should be given to the domestic consumer electronics industry for increasing the physical production.

The Government has expanded the list of items allowed for import under the SIL Scheme after carefully considering the suggestions contained in these representations.

New Service Charge Structure adopted by Commercial Banks

*336. DR. SANJAYA SINH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Banks Association has revolved a three-tier ser vice charge structure for adoption by com mercial banks;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether the proposal has been dis cussed with Industry Association, Chamber of Commerce and customers' fora; if so, what is their reaction in regard thereto; and

(d) what steps Government have taken to eliminate delay in the collection of outstation cheques which usually take mora than one month, and with what results ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) and (b) Indian Banks' Association (IBA) have reported that certain proposals for levying differential service charges keeping in view the customer profile, degree of computerisation and volume of business are under their consideration.

(c) The issue of service charges it diecussed in banker-customer meets organised by the IBA from time to time.

(d) With a view to reduce delays in collection of outstation cheques, Reserve Bank of India have advised all public sector banks to use inter-city computerised clearing and courier services for speedy transmission of cheques. Besides, banks have been _directed to offer immediate credit for outstation cheques upto Rs. 5,000/- to individual account holders and to pay interest @2 per cent p.a. over the savings bank interest rate for delayed collection of cheques beyond 10/14 days.

Hike in Prices of Consumer Goods

' *337. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to -state:

(a) whether it has been reported in the press that the consumers will have to pay 20 per cent more on consumer items;

(b) if so, whether Government have examined these press reports;

(c) whether these prices have increased due to the levy of excise duty on a number of consumer goodsi manufactured by Small Scale Sector;

(d) if so, to what extent the price-rise has been noticed during March-April so
fary and

(e) what steps are being taken by Government to check the hike in prices ?

THE MINISTE!? OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASEKHAR MURTHY) : (a) and (b) In the absence of any specific details, it is difficult to confirm or examine such reports.

(c) to (e) Prices of any commodity are governed by market forces and excise duty is only one of the factors. Moreover, small scale units with a tcmover upto Rs. 2 crores have generally not been affected by the Budget proposals as they will not be required to pay duty on clearances upto Rs. 30 lakhs. For further clearances upto an aggregate value of Rs. 75 lakhs, the SSI units are required to pay duty at concessional rates. It is only when clearances exceed Rs. 75 lakhs that they are required to pay normal duty. Thus the exemptions withdrawn in the budget will not affect tiny and genuinely small scale units.

Loss of Foreign Exchange through Foreign Airlines

*338. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) how much foreign exchange went out of the country through the foreign airlines during the period 1993-94 airline-wise; and

(b) how much foreign exchange was earned by Air India and Indian Airlines during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASEKHAR MURTHY) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Powerloom Units in the Country

*339. SHRI PRAGADA KOTAIAH : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of powerloom units in the country and the number of workers working therein, both in weaving and preparatory process;

(b) the number of powerlooms units with more than 10 powerlooms under one roof, employing more than 10 workers both in weaving and preparatory process of winding, warping, pirning etc.;

(c) whether powerloom units with more han 10 looms under one roof are governd by factory and labour laws;

(d) whether facilities like hygenic conditions, job security, standard wages, PF and gratuity, Medical care under ESI are provided to the workers in the powerloom units with more than 10 looms;

(e) whether the workers on powerlooms in units with more than 10 looms are treated at par with workers in powerlooms in textile mills relating to facilities and concessions; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?